

95-174

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FEB 28 1996

Eugenie Bradford Barrows  
 5926 Shadow Wk  
 Alexandria, VA 22310

Feb 6, 1996

FCC MAIL ROOM

Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission  
 1919 M Street NW  
 Washington, D.C. 20554

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Dear Sir,

I am writing for the Notice of Inquiry #95-484.

I am profoundly deaf in both ears — one going to mumps when I was <sup>7 years ago</sup> ten, the other, after a slow deterioration, suddenly plummeting. Though now seventysix, I am active still and have found many things to occupy my time each day: pottery, gardening, packing grocery bags of food for the hungry, card games with my grandchildren, an occasional lunch or tea with a friend. But in the evenings I am ready to relax in front of the TV with my husband.

It is important, not only to me, but to my husband that he and I watch together, + that he does not have to forego his favorite program because there are no captions for me. We used captions on local news. A recent study cited on the News Hour by Jim Lehrer said how few

people knew their Senators or Representatives names. So the local news is a very important conveyer of this local information which is essential if we are to be informed voters. (over)

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They also discussed the fact that not knowing who to vote for discouraged voting + accounted for our low interest in the polls. Since the recent vote in Oregon by mail even the elderly who might not get out to the polls will perhaps soon find they too can vote as their state adopts the mail alternative. So please give us captions so we can all participate intelligently in our country's democratic system.

Eugenie Bradford Barrows

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I strongly favor a law requiring captions on all TV programs, though I can see some exemptions should be granted to frivolous talk-show programs. But please extend captions in all news discussions, policy discussions, especially the local news. We need to focus on strengthening our democracy by keeping people informed of their local problems, local solutions offered, and presentations of the people addressing these problems, so we can vote for the representative we find addressing these problems to our liking.

As a disproportionate part of the deaf population is elderly it is important to have captions on these local news programs. We retirees have time available to learn + study the problems, + as most of us have grandchildren whose future we are vitally concerned about, help us to act and to vote intelligently on the problems in our communities by giving us local news, with captions. Let us see + "hear" (by captions) the local representatives + those proposing other solutions to our problems, so we can choose freely + intelligently.

Most sincerely,

Eugenie Lowe Bradford Barrows

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26 Feb 1996  
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Dear Sir or Madame,

I am writing to you on the matter of closed captioning for the Deaf community. My American Sign Language teacher at New York University, Greg Hlibok, has asked his class for support. I am gladly participating.

As a hearing person, I have no idea how many obstacles a Deaf person has to face trying to receive the same services I take for granted. But, I have watched television programs with closed captioning. That is, when the program is captioned, which doesn't seem too often. When I keep the sound up, I see how inaccurate the captions can be. They frequently misspell words and omit sentences. I understand how this is possible if you are captioning a live news program, but in regards to a sit com or game show, there is no excuse. These shows are on tape way before air time and there's no reason why the captioning shouldn't be perfect. It is not fair that Deaf people shouldn't receive the same dialogue as the hearing community.

In regard to the speed of the captions, they always seem a few seconds behind. Again, there is no excuse for this during a previously taped program. Even during the news, it is possible to keep up better than they do.

Last night around 1:30AM, I was flipping through channels, looking for a program that was captioned so I could have some more information for this letter. I certainly got it, because at that time, there were NO captioned programs. In fact, the TV listings for the entire night only indicated one captioned show - ABC World News. I suppose this means Deaf people aren't allowed to watch TV after midnight.

I admit I know very little about politics. But I do know that the current situation regarding closed captioning has to change to accommodate everyone. Giving an idea of the program is not enough. Captions should be accurate, up to speed and without spelling errors. I am a broadcast journalism major at NYU, and when I read the nightly news sometime in the future, I don't want anyone to miss a word.

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth Corda*

Elizabeth Corda

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